

Wooing the Dark Continent: U.S. and China Engagement Strategy in Africa, Is It Complimentary or Competition

**A Monograph
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AY 2008

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.					
1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 22-05-2008		2. REPORT TYPE Monograph		1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) July 2007 – May 2008	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Wooing the Dark Continent: U.S. and China Engagement Strategy in Africa, Is It Complimentary or Competition				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) MARSON, HARRY C. V, MAJOR, USA				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) 250 Gibbon Avenue Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2134				8. PERFORMING ORG REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT This monograph evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of Chinese foreign policy towards Africa, discusses the history of engagement of the People's Republic of China with the African continent, and examines the implications of this relationship in regards to the United States (U.S.). The monograph examines the opinions of Africans regarding the continent's status as a major resource provider for the 21st century and the associated interest from leading economic powers around the world. Finally with the emergence of Africa Command (AFRICOM), this paper lays out recommendations to ensure a more complete understanding of Chinese intentions in Africa and provides AFRICOM planners with methods and means to compete and compliment Chinese efforts across the continent. This paper takes into account both current arguments regarding China as both a partner and competitor and provides an unbiased framework for working with China and Africa that meets U.S. strategic interests and needs.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Africa Command, AFRICOM,					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT (U)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 67	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON Stefan J. Banach COL, U.S. Army
a. REPORT (U)	b. ABSTRACT (U)	c. THIS PAGE (U)			19b. PHONE NUMBER (include area code) 913-758-3302

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)

Prescribed by ANSI Std. Z39.18

SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES

MONOGRAPH APPROVAL

Major Harry C. Marson V

Title of Monograph: Wooing the Dark Continent: U.S. and China
Engagement Strategy in Africa, Is It Complimentary or Competition

This monograph was defended by the degree candidate on 23-APR-08
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Abstract

WOONG THE DARK CONTINENT: U.S. AND CHINA ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY IN AFRICA, IS IT COMPLIMENTARY OR COMPETITION by Major Harry C. Marson V., U.S. Army, 67 pages.

This monograph evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of Chinese foreign policy towards Africa, discusses the history of engagement of the People's Republic of China with the African continent, and examines the implications of this relationship in regards to the United States (U.S.). The monograph examines the opinions of Africans regarding the continent's status as a major resource provider for the 21st century and the associated interest from leading economic powers around the world. Finally with the emergence of Africa Command (AFRICOM), this paper lays out recommendations to ensure a more complete understanding of Chinese intentions in Africa and provides AFRICOM planners with methods and means to compete and compliment Chinese efforts across the continent. This paper takes into account both current arguments regarding China as both a partner and competitor and provides an unbiased framework for working with China and Africa that meets U.S. strategic interests and needs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Africa the Context: AFRICOM and Understanding the Chess Board.....	5
The Dragon and Africa.....	9
The Dragon’s Special Relationship	10
Current Chinese Activity on the Continent	15
Chinese Engagement Strategy Strengths.....	18
Chinese Engagement Strategy Weaknesses	28
African Perspectives “Panda Hug or Dragon Bite?”	32
The Eagle and the “Dark Continent”	36
U.S. Historical Activity in Africa “Sewing the Seeds of Today”	37
U.S. Influence Still a Positive for Hope and Influence.....	39
Conclusions and Recommendations.....	41
Overall Strategy to Maintain U.S Influence	41
Figure 1. Imperial Powers and Areas of Influence.....	49
Figure 2. Chinese Involvement in Africa 1949-1987	50
Figure 3. Chinese Diplomatic Visits in Africa 1963/1964 vs. 2006 Increasing “Soft Power”	51
Figure 4. Chinese Population Growth	52
Figure 5. Chinese Oil Company Investments 1995-2006.....	53
Figure 6. Chinese Oil Dependency 1990-2030	53
Bibliography	54

Introduction

The Bush administration put new importance upon Africa in the National Security Strategy of 2006: “Africa holds growing strategic importance and is a high priority of this administration. It is a place of promise and opportunity, linked to the United States (U.S.) by history culture, commerce, and strategic significance. Our goal is an African continent that knows liberty, peace, stability, and increasing prosperity.”¹

This declaration makes clear the U.S. commitment to a reinvigorated relationship with Africa. At the same time, the rise of Chinese influence in Africa has received much attention in the U.S. and puts a particular cast on the new U.S. policy interest in Africa. Throughout the 1990s, the U.S., as the lone superpower, followed an active foreign policy focused on ethno-national crisis in the Balkans. Late in that decade and in the first decade of the 21st century, the focus shifted to radical Islam in the Middle East and the Global War on Terror (GWOT). This global focus has had the alternate effect of calling attention to gaps in the U.S. span of influence around the world and, most specifically, in Africa. Current rhetoric about Chinese influence in Africa runs the gamut of conjecture and speculation with an ideological flavoring. Neo-conservatives view the rise of China and its aggressive tactics as designed to secure resources for its voracious economic appetitive is undermining world economic stability and supporting anti-democratic elements in Africa and see geopolitical objectives behind the economic penetration. “China’s economic offensive across Africa carries geopolitical implications as well.”¹ Others, who are more sanguine about China’s development, speak of long-term trends associated with high rates of economic growth, growing energy demand, and declining capacity for internal sources to meet that demand. These authors see China adopting an “aid-for-oil strategy” in its

¹Michael Goldfarb, “China’s Offensive in Africa,” *The Weekly Standard* (July 2007), http://www.weeklystandard.com/weblogs/TWSFP/2007/07/chinas_african_offensive.asp (accessed 9 April 2008).

global search for energy resources and see that strategy being applied in Africa.² In the aftermath of 9/11 and the increased threat of terrorism in the Middle East, the same authors discuss China's widening interest in African oil as part of an effort to assure supplies by gaining access to multiple sources of supply.³ This peaceful rise of China, they argue, will bring benefits to Africa and how it is important that the U.S. embrace China's growing influence throughout the continent. The author will demonstrate that both perspectives are flawed and do little to provide an accurate discussion on the implications of Chinese influence in Africa.

This monograph will address the realities of Africa and consider their impact on the interest of the U.S. and China. Traditionally, the arguments for assisting African nations are articulated in the event of humanitarian crisis or as a vague U.S. duty to foster democracy have been, at best misguided or at worst irrelevant.⁴ The author will argue that a frank dialogue regarding U.S. strategic interests is in order. The U.S. government should admit its own interest in energy resources from Africa and strategically define a future advantageous to the U.S. and Africa's energy producing states.

The energy equation in Africa is complex. The countries with an interest in the resources are many. They include the former colonial powers (France, England, Belgium, and Portugal), as well as Japan and other rising economic powers such as Brazil, Russia, and India. However, for this monograph the focus specifically will be the U.S., PRC, and Africa energy triangle. The author's recommendations will highlight the importance of those external relationships beyond the triangle. Appendix A will address the framing of the relationship and call attention to the

²Ester Pan, "China, Africa, and Oil," *Council on Foreign Relations* (26 January 2007), <http://www.cfr.org/publication/9557/#2> (accessed 9 April 2008).

³Ibid.

⁴Anthony Lake and Christine Todd Whitman, "More Than Humanitarianism: A Strategic US Approach Toward Africa: Report of an Independent Task Force," *Council on Foreign Relations* (5 December 2006), http://www.cfr.org/publication/9450/more_than_humanitarianism.html (accessed 25 February 2008).

importance of these external powers and further examine that Africa, in and of itself, is not an open chessboard for U.S. and Chinese maneuvering.

Often cited by U.S. pundits is the egregious support of Sudan by the Chinese government as well as their aid programs for Angola and Zimbabwe. No one can argue that these measures are completely counterproductive to democracy and good governance by reinforcing these corrupt regimes. However, these arguments do little to endear the U.S. to Africa or the world community. They are often seen as hypocritical and are self defeating for numerous reasons. For example, most Westerners only hear about China's engagement in Africa in a context of Darfur and their hesitancy to confront Sudan at the Security Council. Lost in this conversation is the past history of U.S. engagement that was at times similarly counterproductive to good governance. For example, U.S. support to Angola in both UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) and the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) during the civil war of the 1970s thru the 1990s caused much death, did little to make the lives of everyday Angolan's better, and did little in building a stable democratic government. It is along this backdrop and strategic jockeying with the Soviets for influence of African governments, along with a growing desire to control access to cheap oil and other resources, which played out all over Africa to the detriment of most Africans. The region today still has the scars of imperialism. Although many see China's actions as reprehensible, it is important that all actions on the continent be clearly understood in its context.⁵ This history, reinforced by European behavior during colonialism provides little room for Western nations to lecture the Africans and the Chinese. In fact, these overt aggressive declarations work directly against U.S. diplomacy and provide the U.S. diplomatic corps little flexibility when engaging these countries. This counterproductive rhetoric, in the wake of the "Axis of Evil" approach taken by the U.S. in 2001 towards terrorism, has

⁵John Ghazvinian, "Untapped: The Scramble for Africa's Oil," *Slate Magazine* (3 April 2007): 126-154, <http://www.slate.com/id/2163389/entry/2163395/> (accessed 25 February 2008).

shown, after further examination, that the “Axis of Evil” message did not provide diplomats or policy makers much latitude in finding creative solutions to difficult problems. It is this understanding of diplomacy and rhetoric that will be explored to further provide a framework for U.S. policy in Africa by examining the opinions and perspectives of the Africans, Americans, and Chinese.

This monograph will examine the U.S. and Chinese relationship and see how the U.S. can best interact with China to ensure successful engagement with Africa. This author will argue that U.S. strategists must be able to deal, negotiate, and discuss China in Africa in a framework of explicit understanding of the relationship of these two nations (primarily economically) outside of the African context. Specifically, planners must understand the workings of China and U.S. relations before they can analyze U.S., China, and Africa relations, and how to mold these influences in a positive manner for all parties involved. This understanding will then provide a basis for policies, which can actively compliment China’s activities in certain areas of Africa where it is seen as beneficial and also provide counter-balance, as necessary, when China’s activity is seen to be counterproductive to U.S./African interests. This approach will allow planners to accurately identify and understand the leverage points that can be used to effect U.S. influence on the continent. More important, the author will argue U.S. policy makers using this knowledge will be able to recommend and accurately identify which element of the DIME (Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic) instruments of national power that will be most productive to achieve a particular strategic ends.

This monograph will also focus specifically on African perspectives, as they relate to China and the West, and furthermore explain how Africans see this emerging relationship between China and the west on the continent. The author will also identify areas where the U.S. can most garner influence with Africa, and how, from the African perspective, the U.S. can best complement or counter China’s activity on the continent. In closing, the author will recommend a more comprehensive African strategy, in which Africa Command (AFRICOM) could play a

significant role, and the policies needed for more effective U.S. involvement in the region. These recommendations will be based on a pragmatic foundation of what is important to Africa and what is important to the U.S. and what it means to China?

Africa the Context: AFRICOM and Understanding the Chess Board

This monograph deals directly with U.S., China, and African relationships. It is important for the reader to understand that these three injects are only a small part of the complex system called Africa. They in fact are only a very small piece of the puzzle when it comes to understanding Africa. To provide a baseline for U.S. engagement and context, this author will provide some background on AFRICOM and highlight the issues and systems that makeup the DNA of Africa and only when understanding and appreciating these issues can one effectively operate and deal with Africa.

On 6 February 2007, President Bush announced the establishment of African command. President Bush highlighted this new command by saying, “This new command will strengthen our security cooperation with Africa and help to create new opportunities to bolster the capabilities of our partners in Africa. Africa Command will enhance our efforts to help bring peace and security to the people of Africa and promote our common goals of development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth in Africa.”⁶ Interesting are words like development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth which differ substantially from the other unified combatant commands when describing their missions. Central Command which has primacy in the middle east and is the busiest area at this time states “US central Command working with national and international partners, promotes development and cooperation among

⁶The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, “President Bush Creates a Department of Defense Unified Combatant Command for Africa” (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 6 February 2007), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/02/20070206-3.html> (accessed 10 April 2008).

nations, responds to crises, and deters or defeats state and transnational aggression in order to establish regional security and stability.”⁷

The changing world has called for a new approach, in the 21st century Africa has strategically become more and more vital to the US. Deputy Under Secretary Henry stated, “Africa is emerging on the world scene as a strategic player and we need to deal with it as a continent.”⁸ This statement is true but only tells one-half the story. The fact that the U.S. needs to deal with Africa as a continent is long overdue. What is most important is the lens from which one looks through it. Unfortunately during the 1990s, the U.S. emerged from the Cold War as the worlds only true superpower, however, what many Americans failed to appreciate was that there are limits to that power. Africa lost relevance on the American public and policy makers as issues like Somalia and Rwanda did little to ignite the nations interest. These issues along with America’s fundamental lack of understanding of the African context and system led to a gross overestimation to U.S. influence and relevance on the continent.⁹ This translated meant that nations like France, Belgium, the former Soviet Union, Portugal, Britain, Libya, South Africa, Egypt, and China have long held influence with in the African continent and for the U.S. to have assumed that it automatically would assume the mantle of African hegemon after the Cold War was shortsighted and incorrect. During the late 1990s carrying over to the current Bush administration issues like terrorism, need for natural resources outside of the volatile middle east, armed conflict and humanitarian crisis, HIV/AIDS, international crime, and China’s growing influence have spurred the U.S. to act.¹⁰

⁷U.S. Central Command, Our Mission, <http://www.centcom.mil/> (accessed 11 April 2008).

⁸Department of Defense, “Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Ryan Henry,” *News Transcript*, 23 April 2007, <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=3942> (accessed 11 April 2008).

⁹Mark Huband, *The Skull Beneath the Skin: Africa after the Cold War* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001), 115.

¹⁰Sean Mcfate, “U.S. Africa Command: A New Strategic Paradigm?,” *Military Review* (January/February 2008): 12.

This new command in every way must be a different approach than those of its predecessors. Beginning with a civilian heavy structure within a military command that is designed specifically to lead with a more diplomatic and economic olive branch as opposed to the more military approaches of other commands. This civilian approach as well as security sector reform, which translates to professionalizing and aiding African militaries to handle their internal matters, further pushes U.S. forces to the periphery and behind the scenes.¹¹ This major shift from “Fighting and winning wars” to a more long-term conflict prevention and post-conflict transition approach will hopefully be more beneficial in the long term and in fact be cheaper long term as U.S. engagement is more reliable and structured as opposed to sporadic and misguided. The only question left is can it work?

In Iraq and Afghanistan, military planners and civilian policy makers are appreciating the costs both economically and socially with the cost of war. Many of the ideas for AFRICOM have come out of the experiences of these two battlefields. The appreciation of a more synchronized approach of all elements of national power is what is needed for the U.S. to engage the world and it is these ideas from which this author examines the context of the African continent.

Now that the reader understands AFRICOM and its role as the lead hand of U.S. engagement in Africa, it is also vital to understand the African continent itself to insure that even though this monograph looks at Africa through the lens of U.S. and Chinese engagement to only have these two perspectives would be disastrous and provide the viewer with a distorted picture of what makes Africa operate.

Africa has so many hidden layers that to understand them all is nearly impossible, however, to appreciate they are there is necessary. African issues throughout the continent are as diverse as the people. Africa has over 53 countries and is the second largest and populous continent in the world. For this monograph, the author will begin with colonial Africa from which

¹¹Mcfate, 17.

most issues of today are explored with that context but understand that pre-colonial Africa has been estimated to have had as many as 10,000 states and polities.¹²

This monograph will refer to Africa in its two parts; the Maghreb or North Africa, which is predominately made up of Berber and Arabic-speaking people in the west, and Egyptians in the east. The Tuareg and other often-nomadic people are the principal inhabitants of the Saharan interior of North Africa. Nubians are a Nilo-Saharan-speaking group (though many also speak Arabic), who developed an ancient civilization in northeast Africa. This second area known as Sub-Saharan Africa differs radically from North Africa region which is predominately understood to be “Black Africa” which is made up of Speakers of Bantu languages (part of the Niger-Congo family) which are the majority in southern, central, and East Africa proper. But there are also several Nilotic groups in East Africa, and a few remaining indigenous Khoisan (“San” or “Bushmen”) and Pygmy peoples in southern and central Africa, respectively. Bantu-speaking Africans also predominate in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, and are found in parts of southern Cameroon and southern Somalia. In the Kalahari Desert of Southern Africa, the distinct people known as the Bushmen (also “San,” closely related to, but distinct from “Hottentots”) have long been present. The San are physically distinct from other Africans and are the indigenous people of southern Africa. Pygmies are the pre-Bantu indigenous peoples of central Africa. To further add to this diversity and complexity, there are over 1,000 languages spoke in Africa.

This context of diversity overlaid with the gross influence of European powers during the period of Colonization in which Africa was divided into various parts as the imperial powers of Europe scrambled for land and resources. This destabilizing effort by the European powers still affects Africa and has much to do with context and systems of Africa today (see figure 1). The effect of these nations as their relationships with each country were vast and diverse and often the

¹²Martin Meredith, “The Fate of Africa: A Survey of Fifty Years of Independence,” *Washingtonpost.com*. (20 January 2006), <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/discussion/2006/01/11/DI2006011101372.htm> (accessed 23 July 2007).

relationships were rife with exploitation and abuse and very often left the African nation with more problems than it solved.

This relationships with European powers as well as issues like HIV/AIDS, Oil, natural resources, tribal conflict, clan conflict, malaria, water, slavery, ethnic representation, genocide, corruption, human rights abuses, al Qaeda, religion, Apartheid, former military dictatorship, NGO agenda's, UN sanctions, peacekeeping, new nation influences (Asian nations like Korea, Japan, India, and Malaysia) all affect every African in different ways and all issues are handled differently. In fact, these issues are only a fraction of issues that confront Africa but quickly give the need for detailed understanding when speaking about the African context or picture. No issues in Africa are solely influenced in a vacuum. The intent of this monograph is to better assist U.S. planners on understanding the Chinese piece of this relationship but as the author has highlighted, it is imperative to look at all the cultural, political, economic, and historical influences to and their context when dealing with any African issues.

The Dragon and Africa

Commonly overlooked in Western media, when discussing China and its involvement in Africa, is that China has been a presence there for a long time. The current cries from the Western establishment concerning China's involvement in Africa are valid but often uninformed. Because of the rise in the price of oil and the continuing instability in the Middle East, the U.S. has placed emphasis on Africa and its strategic resources as pressure mounts to find alternate sources of oil outside of the Middle East. Caught up in this crossfire and tough rhetoric is China, as it too struggles to provide resources for its quickly growing economy and population as well as continue its upward trend as a global economic player. In this chapter, the author will provide perspective on the history of China's activity in Africa and outline the shared intricacies of their relationship. The monograph will highlight strengths and weaknesses of the Chinese approach (DIME instruments of national power) and what it means to the U.S. and Africa.

The Dragon's Special Relationship

Before one discusses countering or complimenting Chinese influence on Africa, one must first understand the relationship between China and the continent. Until recently, China has had a seat in the background as Africa has had to deal with the scars of European imperialism, U.S. and Soviet expansionism, and the horrors of the slave trade. All of these significant events and relationships in their history continue to haunt and affect Africans today. As African nations began to divorce themselves from their imperialist masters of the early twentieth century, they were quickly replaced by another one-sided relationship of the Cold War. This U.S. and Soviet struggle for influence was played out by proxy wars of influence throughout the globe and specifically Africa, for example, in the countries of Angola and Ethiopia. Underneath this backdrop of continued abuse and one sided relationships, China maintained a non-interference policy and only involved itself in socialist movements throughout the continent, maintained a presence as a gauge against U.S. and Soviet dominance, supported social movements, and very adroitly developed a special relationship that continues today.¹³

In 2006, China's Africa policy asserted that China would base its relations with Africa on the principles of independence, equality, mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.¹⁴ Their current policy of non-interference has angered many Western nations as being detrimental to human rights and democracy throughout the African continent. Often highlighted are Sudan, Angola, and Zimbabwe. However, this policy is nothing new and is in keeping with China's long held foreign policy objectives.

¹³Isaac Idun-Arkurst and James Laing, *The Impact of the Chinese Presence in Africa* (London: David and Associates, 2007), 14, http://64.233.167.104/search?q=cache:hoMNH6M5SbgJ:www.davidandassociates.co.uk/davidandblog/newwork/China_in_Africa_5.pdf+Africappractice+The+impact+of+chinese+presence+in+Africa&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=us (accessed 25 February 2008).

¹⁴Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, *China's Africa Policy* (January 2006), <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t230615.htm> (accessed 25 February 2008).

To understand this clearly, one must understand what makes the Chinese “tick,” or simply put, what is the genesis of this so-called benign policy. The Chinese mindset, both internally and externally, is that of a great power.¹⁵ The difficulty with this perception, as is with many cases, is the reality. During the 19th and 20th centuries, China was unable to project itself forcefully upon the international stage. Reinforced and promulgated by the Communist Party in Beijing into the mindset of every Chinese was the accusation that this was caused by the evil Western imperialistic powers (the British during the Opium Wars and the U.S. backed Chang Kai Shek during the civil war and rise of Mao Zedong). This mindset was strongly reinforced by Mao Zedong and the Communist party and provided the leverage and base he needed to garner support for his ideas and promote the communist and anti-imperialistic policies that characterized his time in power. In 1949, his ascension to power was dubbed the end of the century of humiliation.¹⁶

During this time, communist officials promulgated the idea that Chinese weakness was directly related to the amount of outside influence exerted upon the government by Western powers. This mantra of Western influence and chaos is still being purported today, a point this author will highlight later in the paper. Since China has always viewed itself as a great power, “the middle Kingdom,” but has been unable, until recently, to compete on an even table with Western powers, this non-interference policy has allowed them maneuverability in the developing world as a viable unbiased option.¹⁷

The history of Sino-African relations can be traced back to the Sung dynasty (960 to 1279). In fact, artifacts have been found in Zanzibar and as far inland as Zimbabwe.¹⁸ This historical fact emphasizes the duration and depth of the Sino-African relationship. This history

¹⁵Ian Taylor, *China and Africa: Engagement and Compromise*, 1.

¹⁶Joshua Kurlanzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 12.

¹⁷Taylor, *China and Africa: Engagement and Compromise*, 2.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 16.

debunks the notion that the recent rise of China in Africa is in fact nothing new or out of the ordinary. It is, however, deeper and more economic than ever before.

In the current context, most foreign policy experts and historians agree that Mao Zedong and the Communists' rise to power and the beginning of the solidarity that started with the advent of the "Poor Brother Club" of China and Africa formed the basis for the relationship the world sees today in Africa. After World War II, China was still trying to find its place in the world and was deciding how to balance itself between the two world superpowers (U.S. and Soviets) and be a relevant world player. From 1949 on, China engaged itself throughout the African continent under the premise of revolutionary class struggles and non-interference, which quickly endeared itself to the African continent. This relationship took a myriad of forms such as arms, trade, schools, medical assistance, technical expertise, diplomacy, and engineers that built such projects as the Tan-Zam railroad.

This policy was the early beginning of the strategy of uniting the undeveloped world against the superpowers or Hegemons, also called the Non-aligned movement (see figure 2). Complimenting this dislike of the superpowers was the Chinese perception of hegemony and the blatant distaste of it as terminology and belief that it is the root of all exploitation in the world. In fact, this dislike of the hegemony concept continues to be used to full advantage by current People's Republic of China (PRC) rhetoric and policy and is still a major piece to any communist speech that discusses Western policies.

This bi-polar system that evolved after World War II, in which China was not able to directly effect, caused China to search for a strategy it could effectively use without confrontation. In 1954, China settled upon the five principles it would use in relations with India that would form the basis of its policies today: mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and

peaceful coexistence.¹⁹ This decision was a precursor to the principles and foreign policy strategy made during the Bandung conference of 1955, which became the historic Asian-African conference that cemented the relationship and formally established links between the China and the African continent.²⁰

This relationship was forged during the time of the independence movements of Africa as they attempted to rid themselves of their political masters, and at the same time, China was trying to assert itself against the backdrop of the two superpowers. It is necessary to understand that these relationships were based on ideologies and class struggles against imperialism and capitalism. This was not a battle for resources or a relationship in which Africans felt they were being exploited. They believed they were getting a fair deal on equal terms. China, at the time, was unable to directly disagree or confront the superpowers.

Africa provided China the opportunity to further pursue its ideological struggles as well as build coalitions to buoy against the superpowers in international institutions like the United Nations (UN). Understanding this relationship with China is imperative when looking at Africa's history with outsiders as one characterized by misery and exploitation with the West. The historical relationship with China is not colored with that lens and has allowed the Chinese access and opportunities that are not burdened by that history. Whether that perception is completely true or not does not really matter as it has allowed the Chinese to posture on the moral high ground and leverage their relationship with Africa vis-à-vis the West.

This relationship is important to China as well because in the early 1970's, developing Africa allowed the Chinese to apply the necessary pressure to finally become a permanent member of the UN Security Council. In fact, in his initial address to the UN General Assembly,

¹⁹Foreign Policy India, 1958: 97-98, in Ian Taylor, *China and Africa: Engagement and Compromise* (London: Routledge Contemporary China, 2006).

²⁰Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa, Economy Series, Africa-China, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/26/38409391.pdf> (accessed 25 February 2008).

Mao Zedong stated emphatically that, “We entered the UN owing to the support of the poor brothers of Asia and Africa who supported us.”²¹ In addition, twenty-four of the seventy-six votes obtained were from African countries that constituted nearly one-third of the votes.²²

Another issue underneath all this good will was China’s “One China policy” battle with Taiwan, and Africa also provided the votes and credibility to fight Taipei in order to determine who had the most political clout over the issue of sovereignty. China’s strategy of building consensus against the superpowers through aid and diplomacy is a pattern that has served them well. This pattern repeated itself throughout the 1980s and 1990s, depending on the Taiwan issue and China’s need for leverage with the larger powers, and more importantly on the Chinese relationship between the West and the rest of the world. However, in the 1990s, a significant event occurred; the Soviet Union collapsed and a visionary named Deng Xiaoping was in the process of creating the greatest economic transformation the world has ever known.

Beginning in 1978, at the Communist Party Plenum, Deng laid out his pragmatic position with the overlying theme of “stop focusing on revolutionary class warfare and start focusing on modernizing the economy.”²³ This policy of economic growth versus ideology completely and forever changed the scope of the relationship between the “Poor Brothers” and China.

This special relationship built on the principles of the Bandung conference almost fifty years ago, along with the huge economic growth throughout the 1990s, has allowed China to emerge as a major player in Africa and garner influence long held by western Anglo membership. In fact, the change was so swift and dynamic that most Westerners were caught by surprise. The Chinese strategy that caught the West by surprise was soft power. According to Joseph Nye, a

²¹Zhang Hongming, *La politique Africaine de la chine* (Bordeaux: CEAN, 2000).

²²Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa

²³Kurlanzick, *Charm Offensive: How China’s Soft Power Is Transforming the World*, 5-7.

renown political scientist²⁴ soft power is defined as, “the ability to shape the preferences of others, it is by leading by example and getting others to do what you want without all the sticks and carrots.” The Chinese have taken it a step further by redefining it as anything primarily outside of military and security.²⁵

This aggressive focus and soft power strategy have allowed China to make coordinated inroads into predominately-Western controlled areas of influence. It is from this perspective and position that Chinese influence is flexed. Taken into account the past transgressions of the West and the developing world, China has continued to cement and build upon the special relationship that is seen between China and Africa today. In the next segment, the author will further highlight the depth and breadth of the relationship currently shared between China and Africa today and current activity to provide an even clearer perspective.

Current Chinese Activity on the Continent

The President of the African Development Bank, Donald Kaberu, has remarked: “We can learn from them (China) how to organize our trade policy, to move from low to middle income status, to educate our children in skills and areas that payoff in just a couple of years.”²⁶ It is in this environment today that China is rapidly moving throughout Africa on a platform as the successful “poor brother” who made it big. Many African countries look at China as a close relative of similar experience who has made it big. In fact, China is able to engage Africa with a clear conscience of a win-win policy that carries no scars or stains of past misdeeds (slavery and colonial exploitation) that are often associated with the Western powers.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Firoze Manji, and Stephen Marks, eds., *African Perspectives on China in Africa* (Oxford: Fahamu, 2007), 139.

This relationship bolstered by a large checkbook and non-interference policy has proven to be very beneficial for China and, in some cases, Africa. In fact, China has become such an economic juggernaut that it is unrealistic to think the U.S. can forcibly move them out of Africa and, more importantly, the U.S. must think why they would want to. Staggering in its growth is the increased level of foreign direct investment and aid, which highlights the marked increase in Chinese activity and investment on the continent.²⁷ China's focus on FDI investment outflows spearheaded by four government policies that have encouraged rapid growth: special and general tax incentives, credit and loans, foreign exchange allowance, and favorable import export breaks.

An example of these is no corporate taxes for five years once investment has begun. These carrots, applied by the central government, are also further encouraged by provincial governments that also heavily encourage outward FDI and growth (African FDI is still a small portion of China's FDI in comparison to the amount invested in the west and Asia, but still significant for Africans).²⁸ The U.S., on the other hand, while investment is encouraged through organizations like Corporate Council on Africa (CCA), does not have the strength and cover of the government to handle the instability and loss of investment due to the corrupt regimes. This is not necessarily a moral issue, rather, it is basic fear of being unable to recoup one's investments.²⁹ While the U.S. and France still provide more money in trade on the continent, the Chinese are quickly closing the gap as Africa-Sino trade has estimated to have grown from 4 billion in 1995 to 55 billion in 2006 and is estimated to grow to 100 billion by 2010.³⁰ The interesting piece is

²⁷Akwe Amosu, "China in Africa: It's (Still) the Governance, Stupid," ed. John Feffer, *Foreign Policy in Focus* (9 March 2007), <http://www.fpif.org/fpiftxt/4068> (accessed 25 February 2008).

²⁸United Nations, *Asian Foreign Direct Investment in Africa: Towards a New Era of Cooperation Among Developing Countries* (New York: UNCTD Press, 2007), 56, <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Webflyer.asp?intItemID=1397&docID=8120> (accessed 24 February 2008).

²⁹SEATINI, "What Is Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)?" (18 January 2008), <http://www.seatini.org/publications/factsheets/fdishort.htm> (accessed 25 February 2008).

³⁰Alex Vines, "China in Africa: A Mixed Blessing?" *Current History* 106, no. 700 (May 2007): 213-219.

that this is a mere 2.5 percent of spending for China but on the converse, for Africa, this is a substantial portion.³¹

President Mugabe has been fond of saying “We have turned to the east where the sun rises and have turned our backs to the west where the sun sets.”³² This love affair with China has grown even sharper over the last few years because of two overarching occurrences inside of China. In 2003, as President Hu assumed leadership in China, they had just moved into second place behind the U.S. as the world’s second largest consumer of oil.³³ Not only had China moved up as the second largest consumer, it will very soon be the world’s largest importer. This increase of 7 million barrels-per-day to almost 14.2 million barrels-per-day by 2025 has forced China to deal with its role as a major oil importer to keep its economy going.³⁴ This voracious appetite for oil has made it clear that energy diversification is paramount in maintaining the Chinese economy and insuring that no lapses in resources occur. This realization forced China to go outside its usual partners and look for alternate sources for resources. This has squarely put them face-to-face with the U.S. and the western nations as they jockey in Africa and vie for the same resource.

Also forcing China’s policy was an incident that occurred when the Chinese multinational oil company, China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC), made a bid of \$18.5 billion to purchase Union Oil Company of California (UNOCAL), an American oil company (9th largest in the U.S.), that was halted by the U.S. Congress over grounds that it involved foreign purchase of vital national security interests. The incident highlighted how

³¹Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa.

³²Vines, 213-219.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

serious the Chinese were about increasing their resource holdings and also highlighted the touchiness of the “China rise” in the eyes of the west. It showed the Chinese that resources were going to be a serious issue for the future. It also proved to be a watershed moment for China as they have pursued a policy of aggressively pursuing oil interests, regardless of danger or difficulty, throughout the globe.³⁵

Currently, there are over 750 Chinese companies operating in over 50 countries in Africa.³⁶ These interests cover the range of all types of resources from oil to cobalt. This stepped up pursuit of resources and trade has provided a clear picture of China’s intentions and methods of engagement throughout the African continent. The author will highlight the strengths and weaknesses of China’s approach to better illustrate where the U.S. can maximize its efforts when dealing with Africa and China on the continent. The author will also highlight key linkages directly between the U.S. and China outside of Africa to insure that the understanding of the links provides the planner the knowledge to completely understand the framework of the system of the U.S., China, and Africa relationship and provide policy suggestions that take all these linkages into consideration.³⁷

Chinese Engagement Strategy Strengths

In this section, the author will list, in no-certain order, the strengths and weaknesses of Chinese engagement in Africa, the leverage points against the U.S., and show how they use them to gain their advantages. This listing will provide the backdrop for the conclusion as the author

³⁵Peter Grier, “Unocal Deal Tests US Stance Toward China, *Christian Science Monitor*, 18 July 2005, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0718/p02s01-uspo.html> (accessed 24 April 2005).

³⁶Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa

³⁷Peter Navarro, *The Coming China Wars: Where They Will Be Fought and How They Can Be Won* (New Jersey: Financial Times Press, 2007), 200.

works to develop a model from which AFRICOM can effectively plan and engage both Africa and China in the future.

Slave Trade: China does not carry the burden of being involved in one of the most reprehensible activities in the history of the world. This period of African history with the West still heavily affects both relationships, very often one of distrust and the other of guilt. China's non-involvement and similar exploitation by the Western powers gives it a similar background and point of reference unique to it and Africa.³⁸

Genocide, Occupation, and Colonialism: China has no relationship with any of these words in regards to Africa, or at least has plausible deniability (Sudan and Zimbabwe will be discussed later). In fact, both China and Africa share a mutual background of Western exploitation that China quickly reminds everyone of whenever negotiations are under way. These words are very much laid at the feet of the Western powers and Africa, as well as China, continues to exploit them today.³⁹

Social/Liberation Movements: After World War II, China was involved in Africa as a developing friend with mutual interests who could help Africa balance both the Soviet and Western powers and influence. Though China had nowhere near the capacity as the two hegemony of the Cold War, the Chinese did incorporate all elements of the DIME at its disposal. Their "white elephant projects" (Tan Zam railroad) today are still considered major accomplishments that many Africans greatly appreciate and, in many cases, are the last vestiges of these types of projects completed in Africa. The memory of these projects is one in which the

³⁸Dan Southerland, "China's Media Controls: Could Bloggers Make A Difference," *China Brief* 7, no. 8 (April 2007). http://www.jamestown.org/china_brief/article.php?articleid=2373334 (accessed 24 February 2008).

³⁹Manji and Marks, 130.

Chinese asked for very little and the Africans received a lot. This special relationship and memory provides the backdrop from which China operates today.⁴⁰

World Trade Organization Teamwork: China has also benefited greatly from the relationship with Africa when they formed the South-South bloc of the World Trade Organization (WTO). This mutual alliance was created to insure that Western bio-tech companies could not patent life forms and take control of the bio-tech industry. This joint African Union (AU)/China relationship in the WTO has helped China and AU keep both the U.S. and European Union at bay regarding policies and business practices they find detrimental to their interests, thus building upon the win-win relationship.⁴¹

Economic Messiah: China has given the world an example of how to succeed economically and become an economic superpower outside of the Western model. This alternative has allowed African nations to operate outside the view and direction of Western powers, controlling institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.

Bretton Woods Western Economic Policies: China is not associated with the structural adjustment policies over the last thirty years that many Africans find responsible for the continuing poverty that engulfs the African continent. The burden of the balance of payments to the Paris Club of Donors has exhausted many African nations and leaders. China has stepped in to provide many African nations with another option, an option that provides less bureaucracy and more infrastructure projects long neglected by Western donors.⁴²

⁴⁰Idun-Arkurst and Laing, 14.

⁴¹Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa, Africa-China, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/26/38409391.pdf> (accessed 25 February 2008).

⁴²Peter Brookes and Ji Hye Shin, "China's Influence in Africa: Implications for the United States," *Backgrounder* no. 1916, 2006, http://64.233.167.104/search?q=cache:Qf9nMK7SK4EJ:www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/upload/94305_1.pdf+china's+influence+in+Africa:+implications+for+the+united+states&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=2&gl=us (accessed 25 February 2008).

Non-Interference: Chinese policy is very simple; it publicly announces that it focuses on business first and does not want to get involved in the domestic affairs of sovereign nations. China's message of win-win and "one stop shop" facilitates marketing their aid packages that are tailored to incorporate numerous interests of the recipient nation. This public diplomacy message has proven very effective.

No Strings Attached: China's aid policy is very simple. Their loans come with no political strings attached and concepts such as transparency and good governance accountability that accompany Western loans are not discussed (as long as they do not conflict with Chinese interests). China has habitually only put two requirements on their aid packages: (1) acknowledgement and support of the One-China policy and (2) access to their resources. Both of these requests cause little political pain on the respective governments domestically and are in stark contrast to the Western requirements of support for the GWOT and other issues, which in many developing countries causes major political damage and at times threaten their own stability. The many restrictions and requirements tied to U.S. aid are very cumbersome and, many times, very intrusive in a particular country's sovereignty.⁴³

Charm Policy (Prestige Diplomacy): China has been very careful to insure that it cultivates a very close and personal relationship with Africa's leaders. China does not place burdens upon leaders and insures that it provides an open seat for anyone that it believes can better serve China. This differs from the West that often cut diplomatic ties with rogue nations who operate outside the norms of the world community. China has also cultivated many high level visits and has sponsored numerous forums in China to further build this bond between these nations. The development of the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) has been enormously successful and has cemented the strategic importance of this relationship with

⁴³Steve Mbogo, "African Countries Draft Plan for Relations with 'Emerging Powers' Like China," *World Politics Review* (23 October 2006), <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/article.aspx?id=279> (accessed 25 February 2008).

continued comments of mutual benefit, equality, and common prosperity that have hit a nerve with African leaders tired of dealing with Western leaders. Recently, this relationship has been more fruitful as China has pledged to double its aid by 2009, making it the largest donor to Africa.⁴⁴

Strategic Vision (Political): China, because it is not a democracy and does not worry about elections every four years, is in a position to long-term plan its future engagement strategy. This, compounded by little dissent from a domestic populous, allows the Chinese government the ability to set long-term goals. Western nations, because of the short election cycle, are very often focused on getting elected and often, this leads to shortsighted decisions that are not beneficial and, up until recently, were focused more on emergency projects in Africa as opposed to long-term structural change.

Strategic Vision (State and Business in Lockstep): In 2004, Wu Bangguo, Chairman of China's Legislature, spent four days in Zimbabwe bringing with him a delegation of 100 businessmen who made joint venture deals in mining, transportation, communications, and power generation (see figure 3).⁴⁵ To put it in perspective, this would be similar to watching Nancy Pelosi take a trip around Africa with members of the U.S. business community. To the U.S., this sounds odd, but this is just an example of the close relationship between Chinese politicians and its business community. This close relationship shows that there is little distinction between China the country and China the business. This tightly integrated approach has made competition more difficult for the West and has provided China with a quicker and more flexible approach that has proven quite appealing to African leaders who have been sensitized to the long and laborious Western negotiations. China has also, through its economic bureaucratic agencies, encouraged state owned enterprises (SOE) to go forward and develop business ties to Africa. This

⁴⁴Ibid., 16.

⁴⁵Ibid., 14.

policy called “go out” has been very successful. The system works because China’s government provides intelligence, financial support, and insurance for success.⁴⁶ For example, Chinese construction firms operating in Africa receive export credit for feasibility studies, government guarantees for bank loans, export credits for financing the operational cost of projects, and lines of credit for capital goods and machinery. These safety nets significantly reduce the risk for Chinese companies. Currently, Chinese construction companies, because of these subsidies, can operate at a cost 50 percent less than both the U.S. and France.⁴⁷ This support by the Chinese government is but an example of how focused China is in solidifying its hold in Africa and the growing competition to Western interests.

Coordinated Approach (Ministry of Commerce): The Chinese Ministry of Commerce has broken responsibilities in Africa down into four areas. The first is the Department of West Asia and African Affairs, which provides policy advice on Africa to policy makers and encourages investment as well as trade with African nations by distributing information on the local and regional economic, political, social, and legal environments to both politicians and Chinese firms.⁴⁸ Second, the Department of Foreign Economic Cooperation (DFEC) is responsible for coordinating and regulating all Chinese companies involved in overseas operations. Third is the Department of Foreign Aid, which plays the central role in administering China’s aid projects. The DFA approves all corporations who get to propose bids, awards those bids, and manages those corporations awarded projects.⁴⁹ Fourth is the Economic Commercial Counselor (ECC) who operates in the individual countries and acts as the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) representatives while working out of the Chinese embassies. This very integrated relationship

⁴⁶Bates Gill and James Reilly, “The Tenuous Hold of China Inc. in Africa,” *The Washington Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (Summer 2007.): 39.

⁴⁷Valerie Niquet, “China’s Africa Strategy,” *Politique Etrangere* (2 March 2006).

⁴⁸Gill and Reilly, 42.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 43.

between the Ministry of Commerce (politicians) and the business community provides a very strong base for Chinese business success.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA): Similar to the MOC, the MOFA has two desks dealing in Africa: West Asia and North Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa. Because the majority of Chinese high level visits incorporate large business delegations, all diplomats in Africa work very closely with the business community and the MOC. To put it in context, this would be very similar to the Secretary of State (Ambassador Rice) working very closely with business leaders and all members of the Foreign Service being fully integrated into the business plans of all U.S. fortune 500 countries that operate globally.⁵⁰

Bureaucratic Backing: Chinese corporations, with all these assets focused to insure their success, also hold a strong sway domestically in the provinces from which they base much political support. State Owned Enterprises (SOE), from their respective local province, have a lot of political clout as it is in the interest of local politicians to do everything possible to make their local companies profitable. In the event an Embassy or foreign ministry official in Africa begins to interfere with operations, these companies have leverage to domestically intervene. This ability to reach back politically provides Chinese corporations the ability and flexibility to operate in a manner that provides the most profitability.

Domestic Opinion: China's ability to operate overseas and operate outside the norms of most Western nations is part in parcel with the fact that they have little fear of domestic unrest due to unpopular policies. This freedom allows Chinese companies to operate with little political and reputational risk. For example, large companies like Exxon and Shell are often heavily criticized in the West with negative publicity and must consider the negative implications when dealing with foreign countries (Sudan, Angola, and Chad for example).

⁵⁰Ibid.

International Bodies/United Nations (UN): China is very aware of the fact that African countries make over one-third of the UN membership. China has been very effective at using the international bodies and the UN with African assistance to effectively block discussions concerning human rights violations as well as prevent the West from meddling and sanctioning too deeply into African country affairs (Sudan/Darfur). China has also effectively used this influence to stymie Taiwanese aspirations for independence as well as Japanese desires to be admitted to the UN Security Council. China is working to use this influence to setup economic zones that put it directly in conflict with Tokyo in the South China Sea. China has been successful in using its “soft power” to reduce the leverage of the West when it comes to the international community. This ability offsets Western hegemony and has been quite popular with much of the developing world.⁵¹

Global War on Terrorism/Perceived Unilateral Activity by the United States: China has benefited greatly in Africa from U.S. focus on the GWOT and the Iraq war. U.S. resources and capital have been heavily focused in the Middle East and the cost in monetary as well as prestige/influence has been significant to the U.S. China has been able to straddle the fence and fill the void left by the U.S. This over extension of the U.S. has been one of the driving factors behind Chinese expansion throughout the globe.

Soft Power “The International Friend:” China has been successful, to date, with fence sitting and providing itself as the friend in need in the event that relations with the West go sour. China’s ability to exploit the resentment of the U.S. and its policies has allowed the Chinese to pursue their interests in the name of assisting the developing world with another option. Case in point--Ethiopia, a close friend and ally of the U.S., has been a firm supporter of the GWOT with its activities in Somalia. However, during the last Ethiopian elections in 2005 as President Meles Zenawi was reelected, the election process was under intense scrutiny by Western governments

⁵¹Niquet.

because of the perceived corruption, human rights abuses, and numerous protests that arose.

Under intense scrutiny from the West for possible vote tampering and extortion, China was quick to ingratiate itself with the Zenawi government as U.S. policy makers chastised the Zenawi government for the undemocratic elections. This pattern of non-interference and filling the gaps as an international friend with a large checkbook has proved quite effective against the West.

China Price: The China price refers to the ability of Chinese manufacturers to undercut global competitors by 50 percent or more over a range of manufactured goods. China's low costs make it virtually impossible to compete in the blue-collar manufacturing sector. China also uses its export subsidy to manipulate export activity to insure it has a huge advantage over any trading partner. This is done by currency manipulation (devalued renminbi), piracy, lax health and safety standards, lax environment standards, low labor costs, foreign direct investment, network clustering, and protectionist measures. All these occur outside the spirit of the WTO and give China a huge advantage on the West and, more importantly, on Africa.⁵²

White Elephant Projects: China's bold approach to working on large infrastructure projects differentiates it from the West and is garnering much support in Africa. To highlight this view, Calestous Juma Kenyan, an expatriate and Harvard Professor for International Development, argued: "But the international community . . . has focused on relief and emergency activities and other short term palliatives aimed at reducing the visible symptoms of low level of economic productivity." Not only have Western donors and investors long neglected investment in Africa's infrastructure; they are also failing Africa in their own promises to double humanitarian aid. In contrast, "the Chinese government is not only fulfilling its aid promises to Africa, a Zambian policy maker noted, but it is also encouraging Chinese companies to invest in

⁵²Navarro, 202.

infrastructure development in Africa.”⁵³ This infrastructure development is a lasting policy legacy that has endeared many Africans to the Chinese business model.

Large Intelligent/Mobile Workforce: China’s huge manpower resource and the rampant desire for growth and jobs allows China to quickly be able to move people and resources abroad and, because of the lack of human rights, poverty, and governmental control, Chinese workers are willing to work for less and are not deterred by difficult overseas assignments that would be unthinkable and very costly to businesses in the West (see figure 4).

Educational Out Reach Programs: China’s efforts to conduct student exchanges and invest in Africa’s educational system have paid huge dividends as these cross-cultural programs have further strengthened the relationship between China and Africa. This is being done in a backdrop of U.S. restrictions on visa’s as it becomes more difficult for international students to study in the U.S. over heightened fears of terrorism since 9-11.⁵⁴

This list of strengths is not all-inclusive and, as the author will show, not without problems, but it highlights just how well equipped and focused China is regarding Africa. More importantly, it provides depth into the extent of the relationship between China and the African people. It is important to understand that all these relationships are intertwined and must be understood before U.S. policy makers can make the correct decisions that will be mutually beneficial to all parties involved. China policy is not monolithic and the author will highlight these areas as well. If U.S. policy makers better understand these strengths, they will be able to develop better policies to influence more effectively U.S. and African policy and engage China more effectively, whether the intent is to compliment or compete.

⁵³Idun-Arkhurst and Laing, 17.

⁵⁴Drew Thompson, “Economic Growth and Soft Power: China’s Africa Strategy,” *China Brief* 4, no. 24 (7 December 2004): 3. http://www.jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=395&issue_id=3170&article_id=2368982 (accessed 25 February 2008).

Chinese Engagement Strategy Weaknesses

Support of Corrupt Regimes: China's non-interference policy has come into question lately as its support to corrupt regimes has tarnished its reputation. The genocide in Sudan and China's slow effort to resolve the crisis has been severely criticized by the international community. China's support to rogue President Mugabe of Zimbabwe has further exposed the ugly side of Chinese foreign policy. This so-called non-interference policy, which translated means "as long as we get our resources we do not care what you do," is slowly eroding the good nature of China's so called Charm offensive.

Eliminates Local Economies: The huge influx of cheap Chinese goods has been beneficial to the people of Africa, but, unlike Western nations that have the ability to absorb some job loss and the erosion of their blue collar work forces, Chinese presence is all but eliminating any potential for Africa to establish a manufacturing base and, more importantly, maintain a competitive advantage in these markets. For example, the Africa's textile and clothing manufacturers face exterminatory Chinese competition not only in their own backyards but, thanks to the phasing out of the Multi-fiber Agreement in January 2005, in traditionally safe export markets like the U.S. as well. According to the World Bank, even after the U.S. and EU decided to re-slam quotas on Chinese clothing and textile exports, African clothing and textile exports have still declined by 17.3 percent and 16.9 percent respectively.⁵⁵

Chinese Business Practices: Chinese assistance and "white elephant" projects have been a source of excitement and pride for Africans, as the West has long neglected their infrastructure due to it being too costly. However, Chinese aid and work on these projects has been awarded to mostly Chinese companies and employs mostly Chinese workers. The negative is that they do little for the local economies and in passing on the technical expertise and "know how" that goes

⁵⁵Idun-Arkhurst and Laing, 18.

into building these projects. In Angola, the work force is nearly 90 percent Chinese on all the projects.⁵⁶

As the end result is little gain for the local community and no real technical expertise or skill trades take place, it is a win-win for the Chinese, but, not so for the Africans. This practice is also slowly eroding the Chinese goodwill across the continent.

Environmental Damage/Safety: China's reputation regarding the environment and safety standards has carried over to its operations in Africa where its blatant exploitation of workers and the environment are causing the ire of many Africans. In 2005, the Zambian Mineworkers Union (ZMU) reported that over 71 miners had died over the past year. In 2007, President Hu had to cancel a visit to the Chambesi copper mine out of fear of protests over low wages. Chinese policy of continued unsafe working conditions and increased employment of Chinese nationals is eroding African goodwill.⁵⁷

Non-Interference Not So Much: China has increasingly stepped up its presence in local politics and has supported regimes friendly to their interests with increased military supplies and has also threatened local governments with withdrawal of economic support if the opposition candidate, that is negative towards China, wins. This was played out in Zambia in 2006 as the incumbent, Levy Mwanawasa, narrowly defeated the opposition candidate, Michael Sata, who ran on a platform of driving out the Chinese if he won. The vote was very close and, in the capitol, the opposition party won nearly three to one.⁵⁸

No Free Lunch (The Elephant in the Room Is Getting Noticed): China has, until recently, successfully downplayed its role on the continent and has not been subjected to the scrutiny of the Western countries when it comes to its policies and support of Africa countries. However,

⁵⁶Ghazavanian.

⁵⁷Vines, 213-219.

⁵⁸Idun-Arkhurst and Laing, 19.

China's relationships with Nigeria's elite have brought it front in center to the conflict in the Niger Delta. Chinese workers have been kidnapped and Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) officials have publicly stated that they will attack any Chinese companies that operate in the area. Also in Abole, Ethiopia, Chinese workers have been caught in the crossfire of Ethiopian soldiers and Ogaden National Liberation Force (ONLF) rebels over their contentious border and oil resource dispute. On 24 August 2007, ONLF gunman stormed the Chinese oil facility and killed over seventy people including nine Chinese. These activities have severely challenged the non-interference policy and the nature of China's strategy in Africa.⁵⁹

Principal Agent Dilemma: China relies on a complex system, whereas the government relies on individuals to act on behalf of and implement the goals of the government. The problem with this model surfaces when many factors are coming into play that may damage that system (loss of profitability and rapport) which, up until now, has worked. What this means is that China the business, the voracious economic juggernaut, may not be as monolithic as once thought.⁶⁰ The battle to produce profits, the contentious relationship between bureaucracy back home and policy abroad will undermine the ability of China to effectively focus Chinese business and diplomacy in Africa.

Chinese Aid: African aid from China is conflicted along two lines of operation. On one hand, it is given in the form of loans that can be used to leverage governments in they are non-compliant as opposed to the more Western accepted grants. This places states under considerable pressure to comply with Chinese needs. Aid is closely monitored by the Chinese government and is rife with corruption, in the end, focused on profitability that most often has the unintended effect of ruining Chinese credibility, as Chinese companies operate outside the bounds of acceptable business practices that erode the relationship.

⁵⁹Ibid., 20.

⁶⁰Gill and Reilly, 43.

The Two China's as well as the Mutually Parasitic Economies (US/China): China's economic relationship directly with the U.S. is providing much of the friction when it comes to U.S. and Chinese relations and ultimately affects the relationship in Africa as both governments use the relationship politically. This mutual distrust and resentment is being played out in Africa and is creating an environment that is not beneficial to Africans nor the U.S. or China. China's dilemma is twofold: one is its breakneck approach to keep its economic growth that has resulted in two classes (as over one-half of the country still lives in abject poverty), and is compounded by the fact that, ecologically, China has sixteen of the world's most polluted cities. Secondly, China continues to buy U.S. debt and devalue the renminbi to insure that its growth and rapid urbanization can be continued. This relationship is poisoning both the U.S. and China. This behavior fuels resentment domestically in the U.S. and China, further polarizing the two nations.⁶¹

Exploitation of the Masses: The real questions are, how long can China sustain its growth and how long will the people support it? Will the Chinese populous support Chinese expansion and policies in Africa even as the negative rhetoric grows? Will the Chinese people continue to support Western standards of living while they themselves continue to be forced to live below their means? For example, the recent investments by Blackstone Group in China were heralded by the West as canny sophistication while the Chinese felt hoodwinked as its government lost over \$1 billion.⁶² This troubling schism in Sino/U.S. relations has the potential to fallout on the continent of Africa. These growing dilemmas and uncertainty are greatly affecting the relationship for the future. Is this pace and activity in China and Africa tenable for the long run?

⁶¹Navarro, 205.

⁶²James Fallows, "The \$1.4 Trillion Question," *Atlantic Monthly* (January/February 2008), <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200801/fallows-chinese-dollars> (accessed 24 February 2008).

These questions themselves are the most important facing China watchers today and how they, the Chinese, execute their foreign policy.

These strengths and weaknesses provide the framework from which planners can now decide how to engage Africa and China to better maintain influence and develop long-term strategy. The author's conclusion and appendix will show a design method of analyzing this information to better provide a holistic approach to this complex problem. It is the author's hope that with this knowledge about China's foreign policy approach, planners will be able to exploit areas of influence, whereas the U.S. can better influence Africa and China's policy makers, in order to promote a positive and beneficial environment for all parties involved.

African Perspectives “Panda Hug or Dragon Bite?”

“Until the lion has his or her own storyteller, the hunter will always have the best part of the story”--African proverb

In the West, much debate has surfaced on the rise of China in Africa. In fact, the arrival of AFRICOM has been met by much speculation and controversy throughout the international community. Very often, when dealing with Africa, the last voice to be heard or considered is that of the Africans. Amidst all the hoopla of “who is involved in what” or “who influences this or that” is the actual thoughts and feelings of the Africans themselves. Unfortunately, the answer to Chinese influence in Africa does not come easily. Debate and bias are rampant as there is no universal African view when it comes to China. For purposes of this paper, the author will attempt to highlight potential areas of debate that may provide the U.S. an opportunity to better understand and influence Africa in relation to Chinese activity. Furthermore, the author will lay a foundation and background as a starting point of recent Chinese activity and the range of emotions their activities have generated throughout the continent.

Most Africans see the stepped up focus on Africa by China, in and of itself, as a blessing. This renewed focus has given African countries another option and provided these nations with a choice as opposed to the old days of Western domination. This competition between East and

West has provided Africa with a unique opportunity from which it can capitalize.⁶³ This boom in the commodities market has increased overall GDP for many of these resource rich nations but not without certain familiar pitfalls. These pitfalls have harkened back to neo-colonialism and have squarely made Africans think about what they need to do to capitalize on this newfound popularity with the West and the emerging powers.⁶⁴

Africans have conducted numerous conferences to further understand this dilemma. In September 2006, the African union convened, at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, a high level task force specifically designed to come up with solutions necessary to deal with emerging economic superpowers.⁶⁵ Soon after this meeting, many of the academic communities convened forums to further spell out the “way ahead” and deal with complexities of Chinese engagement. These conferences were conducted against the framework established in 2001 of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). African views concerning the rise of China tend to focus on the following areas:

Single Commodity Dependence: The price of oil and the increase in China’s (as well as many other developing nations) voracious economies are making the commodity market a seller’s market. This windfall in money is reducing the incentive for many African countries to further expand their economies. This windfall is also providing regimes in Africa less incentive to democratize or focus on NEPAD policies to build greater long-term stability. It is also eroding the AU’s ability to effectively engage with outside nations in one concerted voice. This being said, African nations need to think about diversifying their economies. A few policy options are:

(1) Avoid competition in labor-intensive markets, thus reducing competition from China in an

⁶³Manji and Marks, 3.

⁶⁴Steve Mbogo, “African Countries Draft Plan for Relations With ‘Emerging Powers’ Like China,” *World Politics Review* (23 October 2006), <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/article.spx?id=279> (accessed 25 February 2008).

⁶⁵The African Capacity Building Foundation, *Quarterly Newsletter* 1, no. 3 (2007).

area they are not likely to win, (2) Encourage diversification into sectors that are complimentary to and with Asian growth, and (3) Maximize potential benefits of preferential trade agreements and geographical proximity.⁶⁶ Chinese competition and high-energy prices are destroying African incentive to become more diversified and spend money on expanding their economies.

Infrastructure: Africa has been pleased with aid and infrastructure projects that have been done by the Chinese in Africa. During the 1990s, much of the infrastructure began to decline as Western investors felt little need to conduct these white elephant projects and Africa lost its importance. China's resurgence of building these projects has not been all positive. Growing concerns on how these projects are tied into the African continent in general and the overall plan for a networked infrastructure with interlinked capacity beyond just the extraction of resources have caused concern among many African leaders. These projects need to be interlinked to insure they facilitate cross border trade and communication to further strengthen the concept of an AU similar to the EU. Another disturbing trend has been the continued import of Chinese workers to build these projects. In fact, these projects are employing mostly Chinese workers and have little to no real benefit for the local labor pool or economy as Chinese workers spend little of their money in Africa and send most of it home. This point of contention is personified in Angola where over 90 percent of the workers on infrastructure projects are Chinese.⁶⁷ Also, China has worked its aid programs for this infrastructure to force the host nations to bid and award these contracts to Chinese companies therefore creating a "revolving door" as money stays in Chinese hands.

⁶⁶Elizabeth Sidirpoulous, with Nastasya Tay and Romy Chevallier, China in Africa in the 21st Century: Preparing for the Forum on China Africa Cooperation, November 2006, http://www.royalafricansociety.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=355&Itemid=325 (accessed 25 February 2008).

⁶⁷Manji and Mark, 3.

Agriculture and Trade: China is a net importer of food, and Africa has the potential to be a world player in the agriculture industry. China protectionist tariffs cover their farmers and agricultural businesses that Africa is in the best position to exploit. It is imperative that Africa ties its commodities and agricultural business into the trade equation to insure that the relationship is mutually beneficial. This debate further goes into the textile and pharmaceutical arenas. African leaders are very keen to the huge trade deficit that Western nations are running with China. The lack of a strong industrial base and China's powerful manufacturing base and their record of unfair trade practices has posed grave concerns for Africa as they decide how to deal with China. China's massive manufacturing base and textile companies have severely hurt the South African textile trade (a strong area of the African economy) by the influx of cheap Chinese goods and clothes. African countries cannot offset the loss of jobs as quickly as the more industrialized West can. Conferences like the Forum of China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) are a step in the right direction, but right now there are still very few African businesses operating in Africa. More importantly, Africa is still assembling the expertise to deal economically on a world stage with these complex issues.

China Inc.: Chinese businesses in Africa have brought with them their expertise and cheap prices; but this is offset by their poor environmental practices, lack of human rights, quality standards, and accountability. These challenges have angered many Africans and now many leaders and civilian people are realizing the meaning of the Chinese invasion. Both Africa and China have set forth motions to fix these problems such as the Beijing and Addis Abba plans, but Chinese businesses are pressured to make money at all costs and political pressure at home often outweighs the heavy costs of exploitation for the immediate benefit of economic growth.

China's increased involvement in Africa has been both a blessing and a continued curse for Africans as they continue to decide on how best to engage this new dynamic. The benefit of this growing relationship is that it can be a win-win for Africa, China, and U.S. if all parties agree to work for mutual benefit. However, as the price of resources continue to grow and outside

economic powers continue to flock to Africa's shores, Africa's ability to develop and handle the differing agendas' of all these nations will continue to become increasingly more difficult, and Africa's window of opportunity to become a world player injected into the developed world will have been missed. It is within this new found difficulty that the U.S. can assist Africa and help mold a better future.

The Eagle and the "Dark Continent"

In 2006, the council of foreign relations released its report on Africa titled "More than Humanitarianism: A strategic U.S. Approach toward Africa." The independent task force of U.S. Africanists concluded that U.S. policy toward Africa should reflect the continent's growing strategic importance. Washington should maintain its historic and principled humanitarian concerns, while broadening the basis for U.S. engagement on the continent. The task force also recommends that the U.S. advance a policy that further helps integrate Africa more fully into the global economy, so that the advantages of globalization no longer bypass the continent.⁶⁸

With this new approach, President Bush, in 2007, stated that: "This new command will strengthen our security cooperation with Africa and help to create new opportunities to bolster the capabilities of our partners in Africa. Africa Command will enhance our efforts to help bring peace and security to the people of Africa and promote our common goals of development, health, education, democracy; and economic growth in Africa."⁶⁹ This new command is to be the springboard for this new approach to engaging the continent of Africa.

These bold statements are not much different then what has been said in the past. To provide a better baseline, the author will provide a small cursory history of how the U.S. got to where it is today. The author will also highlight a few issues that have characterized U.S.

⁶⁸Lake and Whitman, 15-25.

⁶⁹The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, *President Bush Creates a Department of Defense Unified Combatant Command for Africa* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 6 February 2007).

involvement in Africa leading up to the creation of AFRICOM. Once this baseline is understood, the author will focus on the main issues facing the U.S. and the Africa continent today.

U.S. Historical Activity in Africa “Sewing the Seeds of Today”

U.S. history in Africa begins with the slave trade in the 1600s and still remains one of the darkest hours in the history of American foreign policy. Also following the slave trade was America’s attempt to return free slaves back to Liberia in 1822. The American Colonization Society lobbied and pushed for the U.S. government to return free slaves back to Africa. Two groups supported this move. On one hand, this was done because at this time many in the U.S. began to abhor slavery and, on the other hand, many slave owners were concerned that free slaves may begin to cause problems. Both groups felt that the slaves would never be able to assimilate to American society and that a return to Africa would be the best alternative for all parties involved. Liberia stayed close to the U.S. after independence in 1847.⁷⁰ However, problems arose as arguments about Western exploitation continued. However, this author will take the relationship from post World War II and highlight how the policy has ebbed and flowed from administration to administration. In recent history, historians point to the 1958 establishment of the Bureau of African Affairs in the State Department by the Eisenhower administration as the beginning of formal sub-Saharan Africa foreign policy agenda.⁷¹ The debate that has surrounded every administration thereafter has been whether they have done too much or too little regarding particular issues, whether it be the civil war in the Congo in the 1960s, apartheid south Africa, or the ongoing battle with Soviets and the domino theory spread of communism.

⁷⁰Liberia History Time Line, *American Colonization Society*, <http://personal.denison.edu/~waite/liberia/history/acs.htm> (accessed 23 February 2008).

⁷¹Peter Schraeder, *United States Foreign Policy Toward Africa: Incrementalism, Crisis, and Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1.

Africans look back at these activities in the 1960s and 1970s under a cloud of suspicion as each of these activities highlight their trepidation with U.S. foreign policy as they often say one thing but do another. The period from the late 1960s to the 1980s was marked by two competing policies in Africa, to stop Soviet expansionism and the support of self rule and independence for Africans. This is not to say that there was much debate from administration to administration on how to accomplish these goals.

In the 1990s, under the Bush and Clinton administrations, the issues of the HIV/AIDS, famine, the failed state of Somalia, and civil unrest overtook the national agendas of the two administrations. The humanitarian disaster in Somalia was overshadowed by the deaths of army rangers and damaged the Clinton administration, which made peacekeeping efforts difficult implement.⁷² In 1994, the tragedy in Rwanda further highlighted the U.S. lack of desire to involve itself in African affairs and led to a period of Afro-pessimism that carried on until the late 1990s when President Clinton decided to reengage Africa with a new Afro-optimism. During the 1990s, the U.S., under a strong economy at home and the benefit of the fall of the Soviet Union, Africa fell down the list of priorities of American policy and, therefore, suffered as globalization was emerging.

At the turn of the 21st century, President Bush continued with the policies of the Clinton administration, but has began an even more robust engagement strategy as energy resources and influence within Africa have grown in importance since 9/11. The events of 9/11, supported by the bombings of the embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, changed policy in Africa as the U.S. reengaged Africa in its GWOT. This aggressive policy shift was complimented by a growing Chinese economy and rise in global demand for resources. This perfect storm over Africa was quickly changing the way the U.S. operated after the fall of Communism. In fact, it is this change

⁷²For a recent critique of Clinton Administration Africa policy see Chris Alden, "From Neglect to 'Virtual Engagement:' the United States and its New Paradigm for Africa," *African Affairs* 99, no. 396 (July 2000): 355-371.

that has caused the U.S. to aggressively seek answers and help Africa find solutions to its problems, to insure the U.S. maintains relevant influence in the region.

The U.S. has outlined the areas of concern and focus as it develops a more comprehensive African policy. The areas are: integrate Africa to the global economy, reform and prioritize U.S. assistance; deal with the HIV/AIDS pandemic; promote a reliable supply of energy from Africa; build security against failed states and terrorism; dedicate high level leadership to reduce conflict; and prevent future atrocities.⁷³ China's growing influence in the region has forced the U.S. to take these areas into account when developing these policies. In the final chapter, the author will discuss how the U.S. will confront these challenges in Africa and how, in the context of Chinese influence, U.S. policy makers and AFRICOM planners can develop, understand, and effectively articulate U.S. policy in regards to how to best influence Africa, China, and U.S. strategic interests.

U.S. Influence Still a Positive for Hope and Influence

In June of 2007, the Pew Research Center put together the global attitudes project focusing on the "Global unease with the major world powers." The survey focused on both the U.S. and China. Overall opinion of the U.S. is still high in Africa and opinions about U.S. influence, when it comes to democracy, are still high and positive. Over three-quarters of those surveyed in Ivory Coast, Kenya, Ghana, Mali, and Ethiopia say they have a somewhat or very favorable impression of the U.S. Tanzania is the only African country included in the study in which fewer than one-half (46 percent) have a positive opinion of the U.S.⁷⁴ This bodes well for the U.S. The survey goes further to say that nearly nine-out-of-ten in Ivory Coast (88 percent) and

⁷³Lake and Whitman, 15-25.

⁷⁴Pew Research Center, "Global Unease With Major World Powers," *Inter Press Service* (27 June 2007): 13, <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=256> (accessed 25 February 2008).

Kenya (87 percent) express positive opinions of the U.S.--the highest among 47 countries surveyed, including the U.S. itself (80 percent). Favorable ratings for the U.S. in Kenya have risen seven points since 2002, while U.S. ratings in Ivory Coast are about the same as they were five years ago (85 percent). Still, even in Africa, America's image has suffered in a few nations over the past five years, dropping ten points in Uganda, nine points in South Africa, and seven points in Tanzania.⁷⁵ These positive sentiments expose a positive point for the U.S.; however, Chinese efforts on the continent have not gone unnoticed, as the Pew study highlights.

Across Africa, favorable views of China outnumber critical judgments by two-to-one or more in every country except South Africa, where opinion is divided. In both Mali and Ivory Coast, more than nine-out-of-ten (92 percent) have a favorable view of China, and positive opinions also overwhelm critical judgments in Senegal and Kenya, where 81 percent view China favorably. Three-quarters hold a favorable view in Ghana and Nigeria, as do two-thirds of Ethiopians. Even in Uganda--where a third of the population does not know enough about China to express an opinion--twice as many have a favorable view as view China unfavorably (45 percent to 23 percent). The survey provides a trend only for Nigeria, where favorable attitudes toward China are sharply up, rising 16 percentage points in just the past year from 59 percent to 75 percent. While African respondents also tend to view the U.S. favorably, there are significant gaps in a number of countries. In Mali, Senegal, and Tanzania, China receives significantly higher favorability ratings than does the U.S. But in Ethiopia, Uganda, and South Africa, positive sentiment towards America exceeds that towards China.⁷⁶ These positive numbers provide hope for the U.S. and give ground to AFRICOM leaders and businesses to still effectively engage in Africa. This popularity must be capitalized on and the relevant leaders must focus on a strategy that is clearly understood by all elements of the U.S. power system.

⁷⁵Ibid., 14.

⁷⁶Ibid., 41.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall Strategy to Maintain U.S Influence

The author has highlighted both the strengths and weaknesses of China's approach to Africa and also the importance of the China/U.S. relationship that exists outside of Africa. It is with both these relationships that the U.S. must consider as it goes forward. Paramount is the fact. The U.S. controls its own destiny and the belief of a monolithic rise of China is not fact. The U.S. must use this position to better articulate Africa's and U.S. interests and maximize China's interest on the continent for the betterment of all parties involved. The U.S. will very much have a say in what happens in the future. The U.S. must acknowledge that its deep global engagement with China is a permanent feature of its international position. That acknowledgement can help African states better understand China and maximize their resources for the benefit of the continent. If the U.S. handles the relationships properly and provides the guidance and expertise, this might facilitate a positive Chinese/U.S. involvement in Africa. In order to do this, the U.S. must make some difficult decisions in this extremely complex, triangular relationship. Sensitive issues like oil rights in the Gulf of Guinea; discussions about Darfur and the Ethiopia, Somalia, and Eritrea conflict; and World Trade Organization discussions on how to best maximize African products vis-à-vis cheaper Chinese goods,

Both China and the U.S. are stakeholders in Africa. Domestically, U.S policy must deal with the economy and discrepancies with China that cloud all other discussions. As former U.S. Secretary Lawrence Summers stated: "There is something inherently wrong with the world's greatest power being the world's greatest debtor. It surely cannot be prudent for us as a country to rely on a kind of balance of financial terror to hold back the reserves that would threaten our stability."⁷⁷ The current disequilibrium in the US-PRC balance of payments raises the issue of

⁷⁷Navarro, 203.

possibility of blackmail via currency reserves in the context of U.S.--PRC international competition around the globe and, more specifically, Africa. Today, the Chinese government is focused on maintaining power and that can only be done by continual economic growth. With the key ingredients of nationalism and anti-Americanism depending on the actions taken by the U.S., it is not impossible to foresee a future where the U.S. and China are at odds. As China acquires more and more U.S securities, it has an increasing ability to destabilize U.S. financial markets, and as China's resource imports grow (see figures 5 and 6) and competition between the U.S. and China become fiercer, Africa is strategically placed to feel the reverberations of this relationship. An example is if China begins to feel the squeeze as U.S. oil companies continue to push Chinese companies out of Africa, China's government could trigger a crash in the U.S. stocks and bond markets.⁷⁸ Worse yet, this escalation will only drive to reinforce corruption and, in the long run, hurts Africa's chances for modernization. These complex issues, both internal and external to Africa, between the U.S. and China, must be studied carefully to insure that all parties maximize Africa's historic opportunity for growth.

Both, Africa and the U.S. have similar issues with China's cheap labor, manufacturing, human rights abuses, and exploitation of resources. Though the U.S. and Africa are different, they still share the same problems with China to varying degrees. For example, South Africa, Zambia, and Angola all have had problems similar to the U.S. with China's economic policy. It is in this framework of the WTO that the U.S. and African countries can work together for mutual benefit to better influence Chinese behavior around the globe.

The U.S. still has a reservoir of good will in policies and values that are valued by African people from elites to the average person. U.S ideology of freedom and examples such as Barak Obama, Colin Powell, and Condoleezza Rice are positive proof that the U.S is still the

⁷⁸Ibid., 206.

greatest country in the world when it comes to equality. The Chinese cannot replicate that example. China's non-interference and respect for nation's internal affairs and economic gradualism by the state does have some popularity. But, China's values only apply to certain authoritarian elites or those who think U.S. democracy equates to American interventionism. China cannot and does not appeal to average people who are hoping for a comprehensive, inspiring vision of how to build a free right's oriented political system.⁷⁹ As the Chinese spread throughout the continent of Africa, their goodwill is diminishing as nations become more aware of their true tactics and intentions. Examples like the Zambian mine workers strike and the Angolan government's recent withdrawal of a Chinese bid to control the refinery capabilities are starting to show that African countries are becoming wary of the Panda Hug. Like all relationships, the honeymoon will be over. It is important, then, when these problems arise, that the U.S. focuses and is prepared to strategically handle the situation. This means that the U.S. must fully know where their and China's interests converge and diverge.⁸⁰ Below is a list of recommendations to preserve influence in Africa.

China Expert at Every Embassy: Every embassy in Africa should have one or two personnel dedicated to the activities of China in their respective areas. This knowledge must be understood and quickly exportable throughout the continent, as well as with people outside the continent U.S and China, to better provide a full rounded picture of the strategic thoughts of Chinese government and Chinese business in relation to Africa and the U.S. (This also goes for India, Brazil, and other Asian players throughout the continent.) This "boots on the ground" understanding will give personnel more ownership in the system and make them more accountable. The system also provides personnel with more opportunities for overseas experience other than working in China.

⁷⁹Kurlanzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*, 232.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 234.

Expand the West African International Business Linkages Program (WAIBL) Across Africa ICW AFRICOM: The coordination between U.S. businesses and presidential trips with a calculated agenda developed by U.S. Export-Import Bank, Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA); U.S. Global Technology Network (USGTN), the Department of Agriculture, Middle East and Africa Department of the Chamber of Commerce, and the Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) regarding AFRICOM or the government designated point man on Africa will give the U.S. a similar approach to China that has been highly effective in the past. The President's recent trip to Africa last week (February 2008) is a step in that direction.⁸¹ This coordinated effort should also include U.S. planners at AFRICOM having to attend monthly or bi-weekly meetings of these organizations and have elements establish desk representatives to clearly open lines of communication and breakdown barriers between these organizations. As an AFRICOM planner, it is imperative that they understand and know the full investment and relationship a particular country has with the U.S., as to insure they are complimenting, not hindering, the relationship. Bottom line, the U.S. government must become even more pro-active in supporting and underwriting U.S. business interests in very difficult economic endeavors. This approach must adjust some of the country's Laissez-faire business practices and provide deeper assistance where necessary. This concept is being used by the Chinese with positive results and is often cited by foreign nations as a true benefit when dealing with Chinese delegations.⁸²

AFRICOM/DOS/Universities: A new outreach program must be put in place for both U.S. and African students and professors. For students, there must be more money provided to encourage the students to intern in Africa and work with the various agencies of DoS/DoD and also provide jobs to those who want to stay and become African policy experts. This system

⁸¹All Africa .com. Presidents trip to Africa, <http://allafrica.com/> (accessed 24 February 2008).

⁸²Kurlanzick, Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World, 259.

would be similar Cadet Troop Leader Training (CTLT) for ROTC students and could possibly be another vehicle to break the academic and military communication barrier. Establish programs that provide tax breaks for all major universities with departments in East Asian and African studies, in which, professors take sabbaticals and work out of the embassies or AFRICOM for six-month rotations. Establish a satellite university for each major country, so that the sabbatical professors can establish continuity with the personnel at DoS and DoD. (Example: the African Studies Department at Kansas University and the Far East Studies Department at West Virginia University develop relationships with the Embassy in Ghana and the two departments develop a relationship with both AFRICOM and DoS personnel, focusing on Ghana and Chinese activity, and this team then provides the expertise on Ghanaian issues to AFRICOM senior staff or Washington, when necessary. This can be done inexpensively in comparison to OIF; it further breaks down the walls between military and academia, as well as provides professors and the universities currency and relevance. It would also provide CONUS units that are deploying to the theater with local experts who can quickly advise of current situations and prepare deploying personnel with the current operational environment pictures.

USE African/Chinese Diaspora: AFRICOM should recruit and find African/Chinese Diaspora and pay them to work with the U.S. government to find solutions. Right now, the highest per capita location of Nigerian doctors in the world is in Atlanta, Georgia. There should be recruiting drives to bring these people on board to help both the U.S. and their respective nations. The U.S. is the greatest nation in the world when it comes to immigrant success and integration and the country should use this to its advantage by using Diaspora to build a better future.

Focus Staffers: As officers hit the rank of Major, their focus should be on one part of the world. Meaning that, after CGSC, officers need to pick a Combatant Command of focus area (example AFRICOM) and before reporting for duty, spend one year studying that chosen continent, to be better prepared to handle the operational environment of that region. Following

that assignment, place the officers at a desk that keeps them in their area of expertise. From that point forward, except for command positions, keep that officer focused on the same area to maintain continuity and regional expertise.

AFRICOM Staffers Get Out and Speak Out: Staffers in AFRICOM must go out and walk the terrain and learn the faces of the people they are trying to understand. U.S. policy is best understood and conducted with a handshake than on a television or radio blurb. It is harder to hate and easier to understand when you are face-to-face.

Think Like the Chinese: Every action must be understood through the eyes of the Chinese. This is easier said than done. The author firmly believes that the Chinese will do whatever is necessary in their self-interest to maintain economic growth. That being said, one must not create enemies where there are none.

Do not Become so Pragmatic that we Forget our Democratic Ideals in the Pursuit of Economic Gain: The U.S./AFRICOM can assist with democracy without meddling in internal affairs. An example of this technique is Indonesia. The U.S. has encouraged Indonesian parliamentarians to visit Washington, along with top university students, to germinate the next group of Indonesian leaders.⁸³ This can be done throughout Africa, as the U.S. finds ways to bring more Africans to the U.S.

Get a Seat at the Table: There should be one desk at AFRICOM that tracks every major conference that goes on throughout the African continent, ranging from “Big Oil” conferences to meetings on public education. It is important that AFRICOM, in some capacity, is represented and understands what is being discussed at all the meetings to better set policy and understand what Africans think about these different projects, as well as other donor nations.

⁸³Ibid., 242.

AFRICOM/AU Jointness: To belay fears of U.S. hegemony, there should be desks for all countries and a military representative at AFRICOM, to prove that the U.S.' interest are legitimate and concerns for the welfare of the continent are real. These representatives will provide in-house expertise on the feelings and ideas from all these countries' perspectives. Also, AFRICOM can use this environment to strengthen regional communication to further develop regional cooperation on specific issues.

Understand the WTO: AFRICOM needs the expertise of the staff to explain the WTO and how it affects U.S., China, and Africa relations. Issues like devalued Chinese currency, imports, and exports place both the U.S. and Africa in the same corner with regards to China. These leverage points must be understood when it comes to making U.S. policy. This can be done in areas like agriculture and textiles, as well as pharmaceuticals.

AFRICOM Long Term versus Short Term: AFRICOM must be a place that accurately decides what long-term approaches are going to be addressed by the U.S. While the U.S. has been quick to provide emergency aid in the event of disasters, it must be much quicker and smarter at developing long-term strategy.

AFRICOM Donor Expert: AFRICOM must have a section of staff whose sole focus is to understand what donors are doing and the focus of their proposed projects. In some African countries, they have as many as 2,000 donor projects going on at one time, with little to no capability to track or synchronize these efforts for the good of all people. As AFRICOM gains more acceptance, it should work with the AU to better coordinate these projects to insure that the overall plan for Africa is synchronized.

Open the Doors: Be sure to enable organizations, like International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), have access to AFRICOM and insure that senior members of AFRICOM understand the organizations' perspectives on African problems. This is but an example of the myriad of groups that work regularly on the African continent and have a wealth of knowledge

that the U.S. can potentially tap into to further add clarity to the system that is Africa and better assist AFRICOM planners with their decisions.

Staffs Should be Broken Down by the Elements of National Power: Each country or region should have its own DIME/ASCOPE section that answers the mail on each subject area and is the subject matter expert on what needs to be done, more importantly, a section that can articulate what is going on and how to further proceed with policy.

The African Czar or at Least a Clearing House that Formulates Policy: AFRICOM CDR should be the proponent to meet this need.

Develop a Council that Brings AFRICOM and Chinese Military/Government Planners Together: Bottom line, integration and mutual dependence are the best ways to insure that U.S. and or Chinese actions can be understood clearly. This approach will increase the “Soft Power” and situational awareness of Chinese intentions and further show African nations the U.S. intent to work for a mutually beneficial outcome.

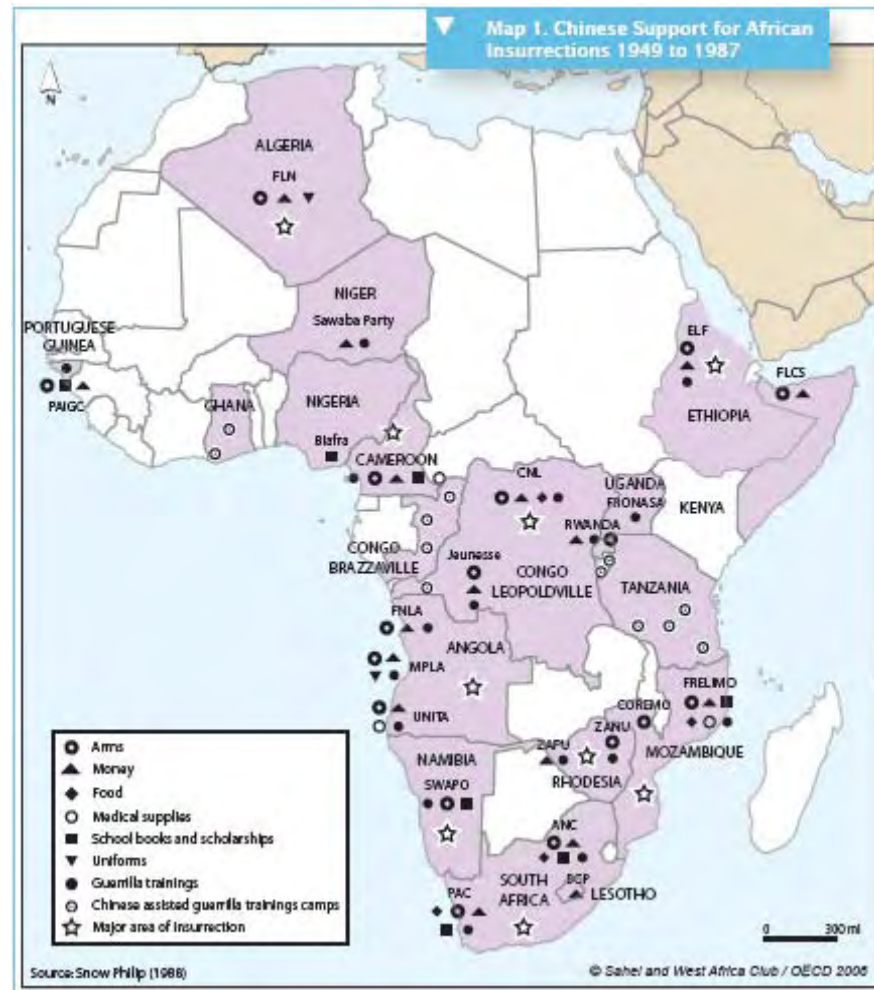
The above eighteen recommendations are few of the areas where the U.S. can improve its influence in Africa. The Chinese have made numerous inroads into the Dark Continent and must be understood for what they are, “China’s pursuit of survival.” China will do whatever is necessary to keep the current regime in power. To do that, they must keep their economy growing to support their huge population, in that context if one understands this they begin to understand the Chinese and their motives. It is in this desire to grow economically and appease its large population that provides opportunity for the U.S. to capitalize on, maneuver, and maintain influence in the region. Because the U.S. has the greatest ability to compete and compliment the Chinese, it is in the U.S. interests to assist the other developing nations of Africa to benefit from Chinese pursuits of economic power. Americans must be careful. The author believes the U.S. is at a crossroads and difficult decisions must be made. AFRICOM, if done properly, is a huge step in the right direction. In conclusion, this author will provide a model that will assist in aiding planners with developing sound Chinese/African policy.

Figure 1. Imperial Powers and Areas of Influence



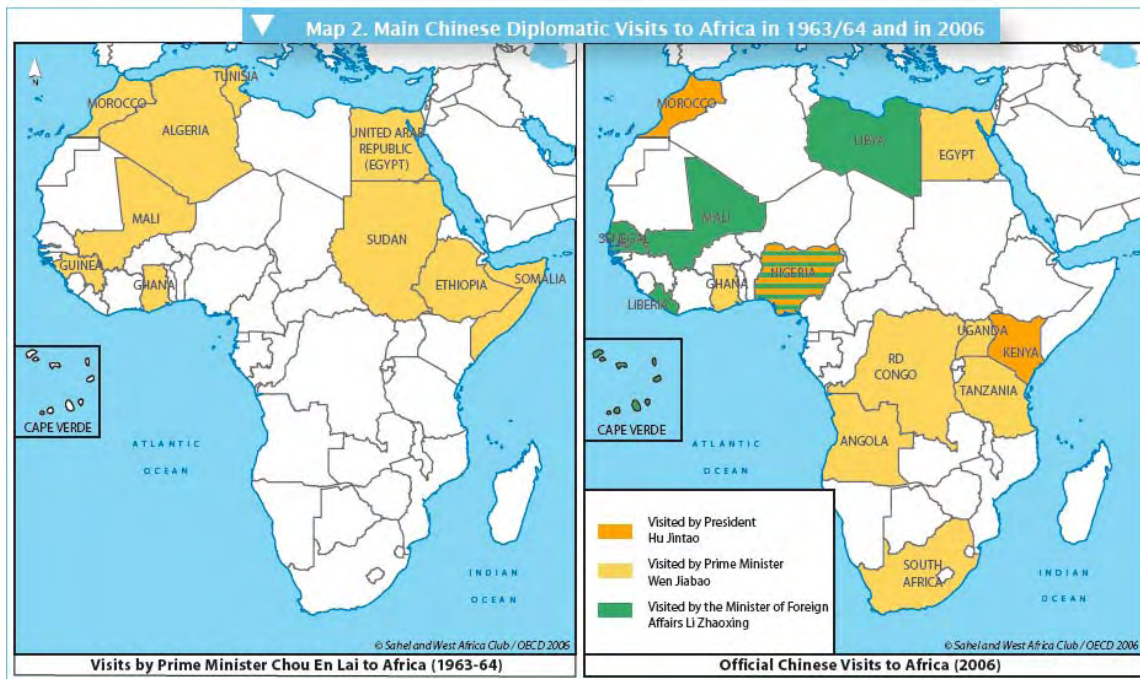
Source: Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia, Africa, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Africa> (accessed 9 April 2008).

Figure 2. Chinese Involvement in Africa 1949-1987



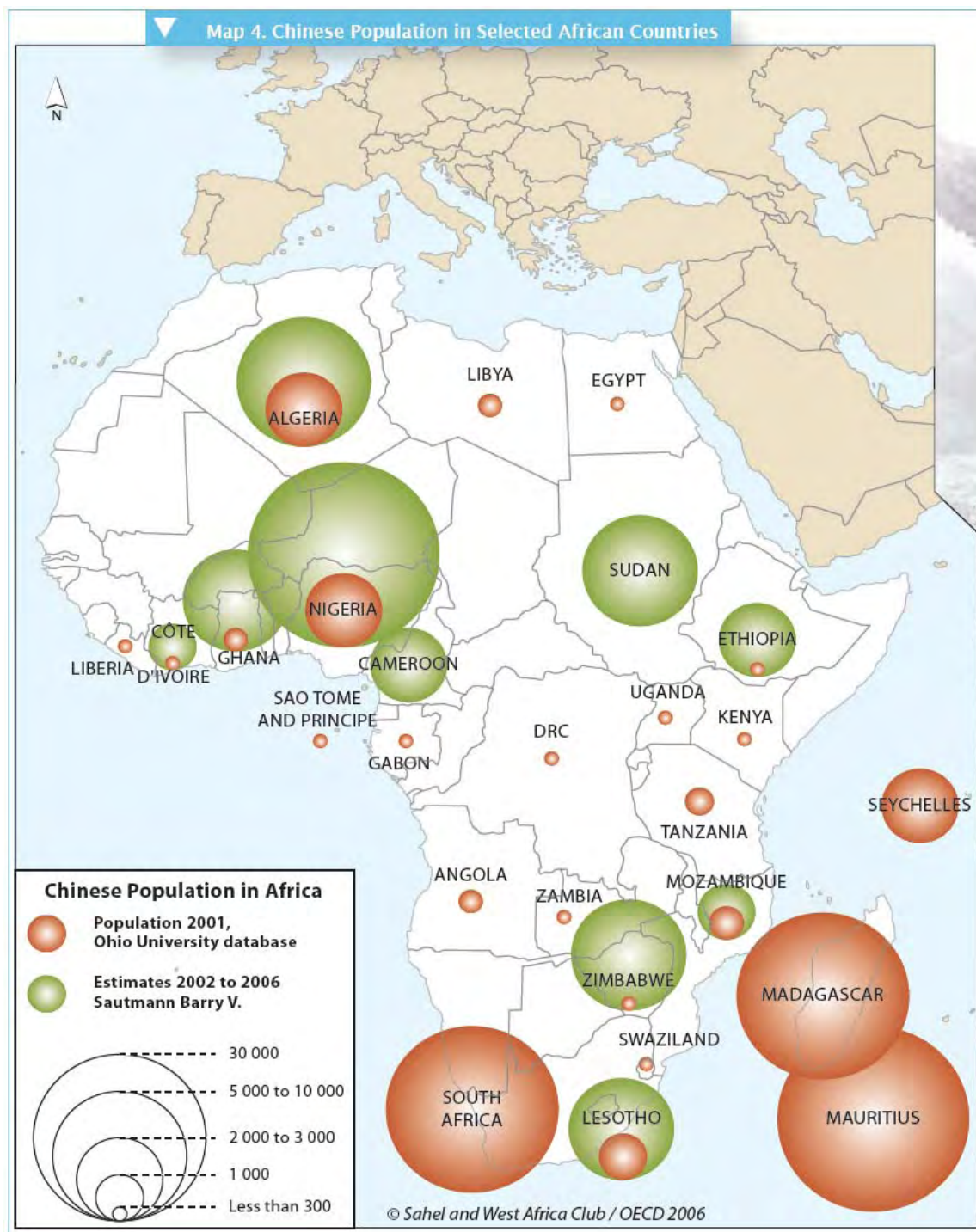
Source: Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa, Africa-China, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/26/38409391.pdf> (accessed 25 February 2008).

**Figure 3. Chinese Diplomatic Visits in Africa
1963/1964 vs. 2006 Increasing “Soft Power”**



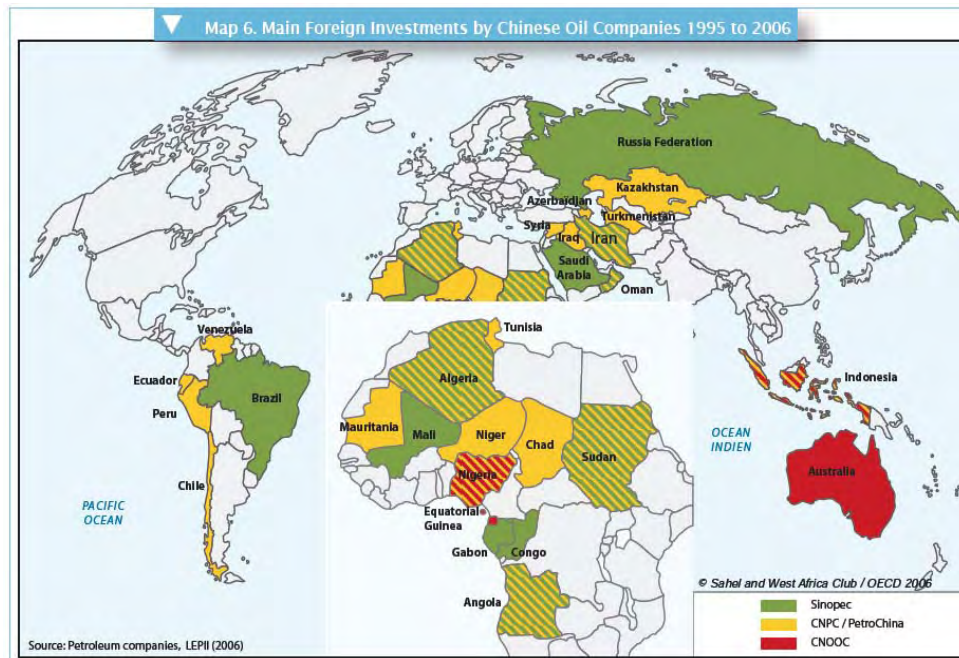
Source: Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa, Africa-China, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/26/38409391.pdf> (accessed 25 February 2008).

Figure 4. Chinese Population Growth



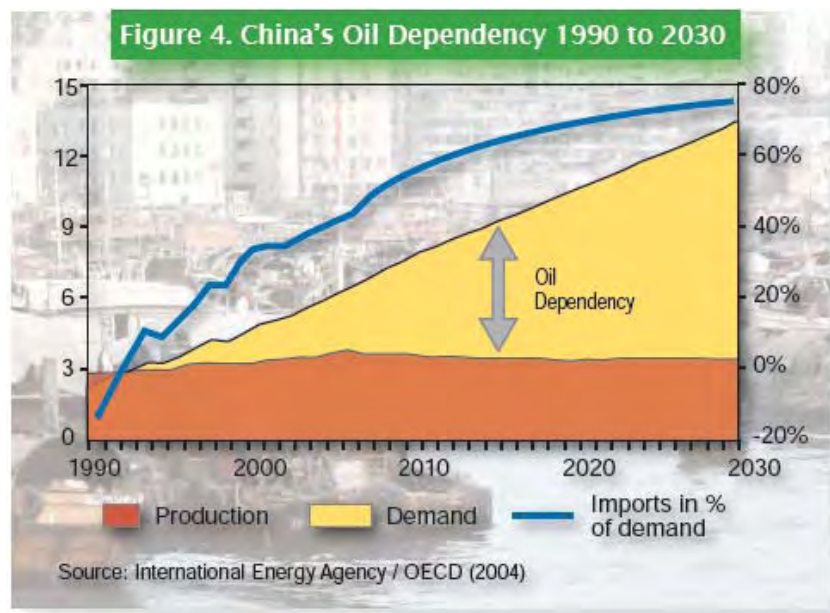
Source: Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa, Africa-China, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/26/38409391.pdf> (accessed 25 February 2008).

Figure 5. Chinese Oil Company Investments 1995-2006



Source: Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa, Africa-China, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/26/38409391.pdf> (accessed 25 February 2008).

Figure 6. Chinese Oil Dependency 1990-2030



Source: Atlas on Regional Integration in West Africa, Africa-China, <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/26/38409391.pdf> (accessed 25 February 2008).

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